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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. |
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09/164,793 10/01/98 WATT

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EXAMINER

JACKSON, G

AUDLEY A CIAMPORCERO JR  
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NEW BRUNSWICK NJ 08933-7003

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3731

DATE MAILED: 11/22/00

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

**Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks**

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/164,793

Applicant(s)

WATT ET AL.

Examiner

Jackson, Gary

Art Unit

3731

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 May 2000.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of the CERTIFIED copies of the priority documents have been:
1. ☐ received.
2. ☐ received in Application No. (Series Code / Serial Number) \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. & 119(e).

## Attachment(s)

- 14) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 15) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 16) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- 17) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- 18) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 19) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*Gary Jackson*  
GARY JACKSON  
PRIMARY EXAMINER  
GROUP 3300

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This action is a response to applicants' Response date May 3, 2000. The examiner has considered the Response, however it is not deemed persuasive. Therefore, the action is repeated and made final.

### *Drawings*

This application has been filed with informal drawings, which are acceptable for examination purposes only. Formal drawings will be required when the application is allowed.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a), which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections, set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Igaki et al (U.S. Patent 5,843,096) in view of Artandi (U.S. Patent 3,157,524) and Haynes et al (U.S. Patent 5,660,857). The patent to Igaki et al discloses a tube having one end closed formed of chitin. However, a sponge texture is not clearly disclosed. The patents to Artandi and Haynes et al disclose the concept of forming collagen material with sponge-like texture for the medical purposes. In view of Artandi and Haynes teachings, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to form the tube of Igaki et al tube of a biopolymer sponge formed from collagen. Further, it is well known in the art to include therapeutic compounds in surgical

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implants as recited in claim 5. Concerning claim 5, since Igaki et al discloses a tube, it would have been obvious <sup>to</sup> ~~since~~ the size the tube according to intended use.

### *Response to Arguments*

Applicants' argument that the Igaki et al reference merely teach a "suture bag" and does suggest <sup>the</sup> ~~to~~ use of a "sponge tube" is respectfully traverse. Also, that Artandi do not reference to forming "sponge tubes" is traversed.

The examiner has set forth the factual inquires as recited below and reasonably conclude that the action is proper.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir.

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1992). In this case, Igaki et al device is clearly tubular shaped and read on that aspect of the claim. In this instance, the examiner sees the tubular shape of the applicants' device and the bag shape of Igaki et al as one and the same. Igaki et al recognize and solve the same problem identified by the applicants except that a different material is used on the stapler. The patent to Artandi clearly suggests collagen sponge tubes because of outstanding characteristics for absorption and strength.

The examiner believes that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to form Igaki's device of collagen foam as taught by Artandi et al.

For, these reason this action is made final.

### *Conclusion*

**THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Gary Jackson whose telephone number is (703) 308-4302. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Henry Recla can be reached on (703) 308-0871. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 308-2708 for regular communications and (703) 308-2708 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 308-0858.

Gary Jackson  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3731

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Jackson", written over the typed name.

GJ  
November 20, 2000